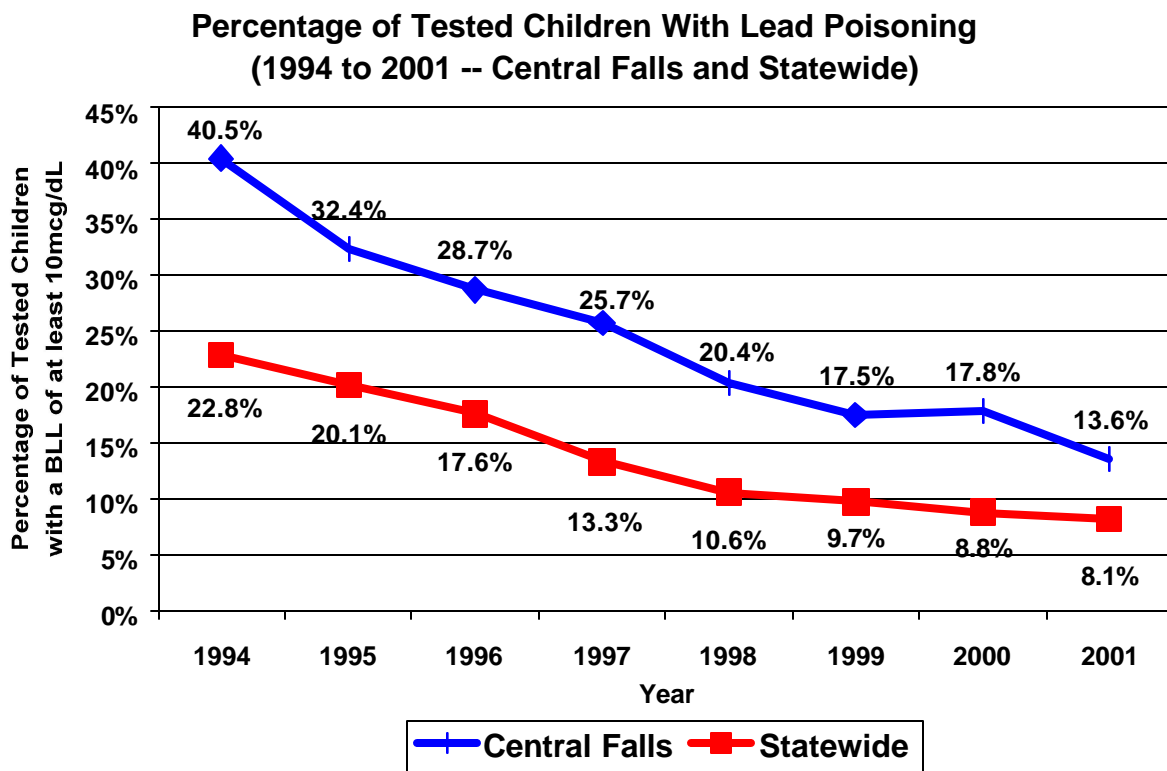


## Central Falls Children with Lead Poisoning

- In 2001, nearly 14% of children (over 150 children) tested in Central Falls had a harmful level of lead in their blood ( $\geq 10$   $\mu\text{g/dL}$ ).
- This is well above the statewide average of 8% of children tested having a harmful blood lead level (BLL).
- Central Falls has had impressive decreases over the last seven years. Over 40% of tested children were poisoned in 1994. The decline from 2000 to 2001 was the largest decline in the state.
- Despite these improvements, Central Falls routinely has the highest or second highest poisoning rate in Rhode Island and much work will be required to eliminate the disparities between Central Falls and the state average.

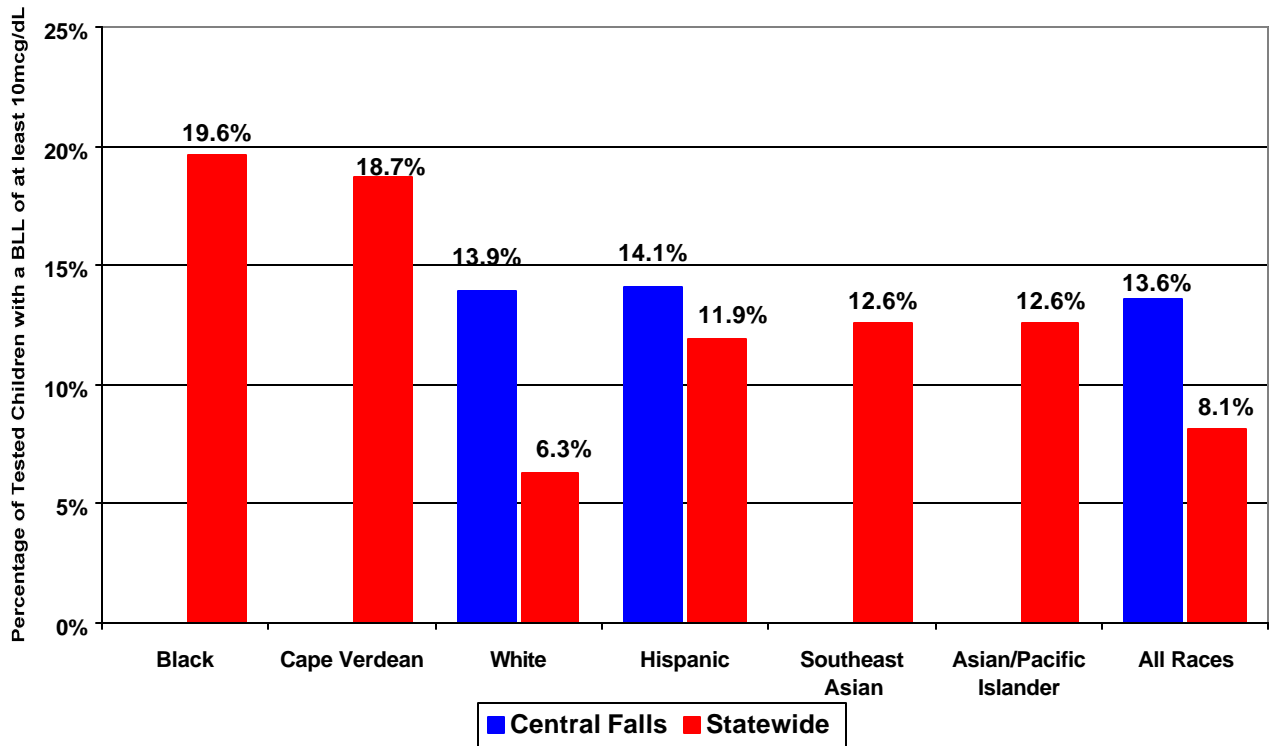


Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

### ***Lead Poisoning Rates in Central Falls' Children by Race and Ethnicity***

- Not all populations of children face the same burden of lead poisoning.
- Statewide, 19.5% of Black and 18.7% of Cape Verdean children tested are poisoned as opposed to 6.3% of White children.
- While all races have had substantial declines in lead poisoning since 1994, the disparities between races statewide have largely remained.
- In Central Falls, adequate data exist only for White and Hispanic children, which have similar rates to each other and to the city average.

**Lead Poisoning by Race and Ethnicity  
(2001 -- Central Falls and Statewide)**



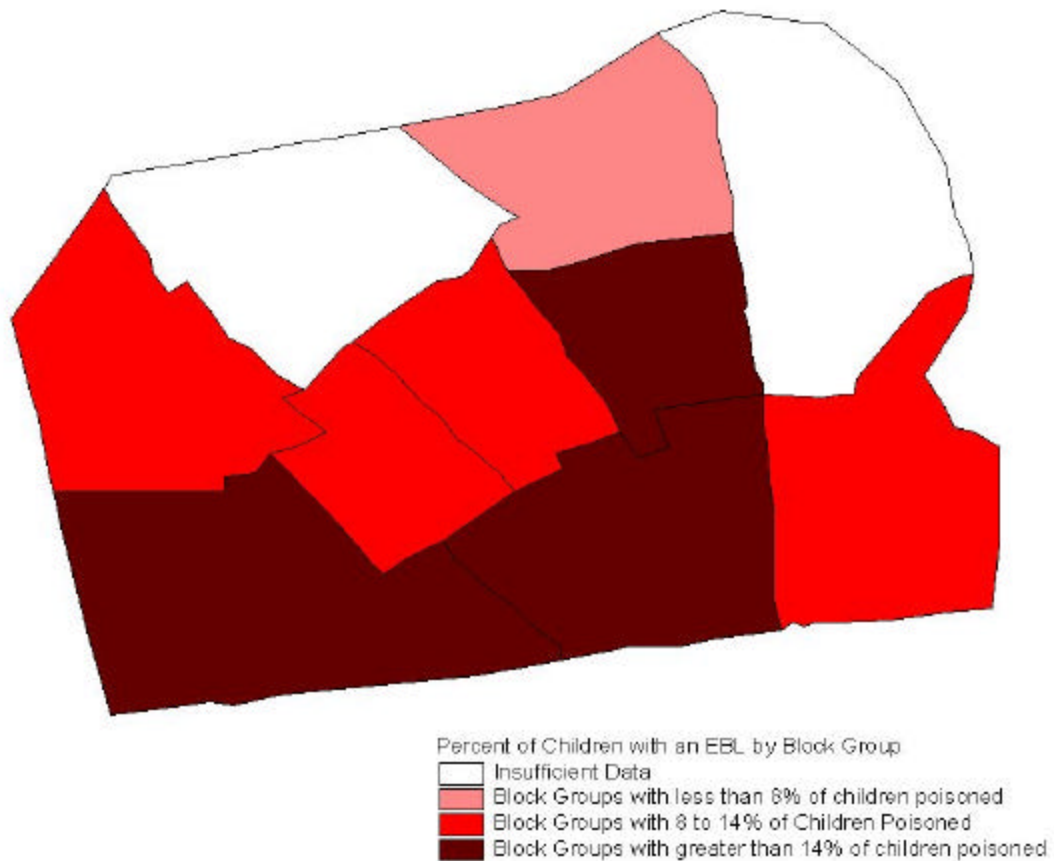
Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

Note: Missing bars indicate that the total number of children tested in the group was too small to yield significant results.

### ***Lead Poisoning Rates in Central Falls' Children by Geography***

- Significant disparities in poisoning rates also exist by geographic location within the city.
- The map illustrates the percentage of tested children with lead poisoning by census block group for 2001.
- Two block groups (unshaded) had too few children tested to yield meaningful results.

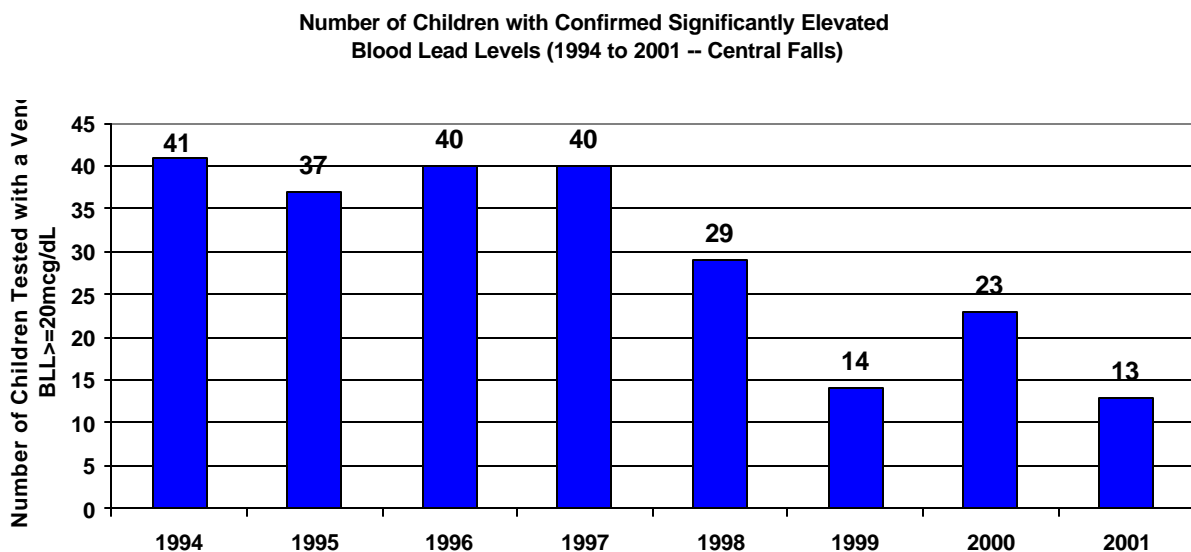
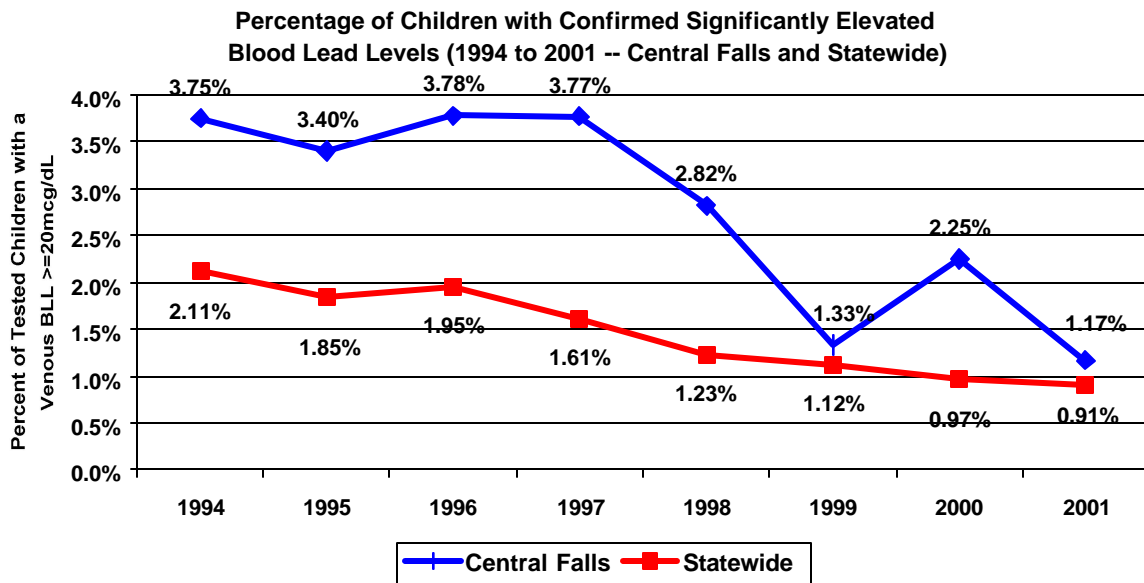
Comparison by Central Falls Block Group of Lead Poisoned Children (2001)



Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

## Central Falls Children with Significantly Elevated Blood Lead Levels

- By state regulation, children with a blood lead level of 20µg/dL or higher are considered to have significantly elevated levels, and are eligible for special state services.
- Central Falls' rate of children with significantly elevated levels has always been substantially higher than the state average.
- After years of steady decline, 2000 saw a sharp increase in significantly elevated levels. Fortunately, this was reversed in 2001, with the level falling back down below the 1999 level.



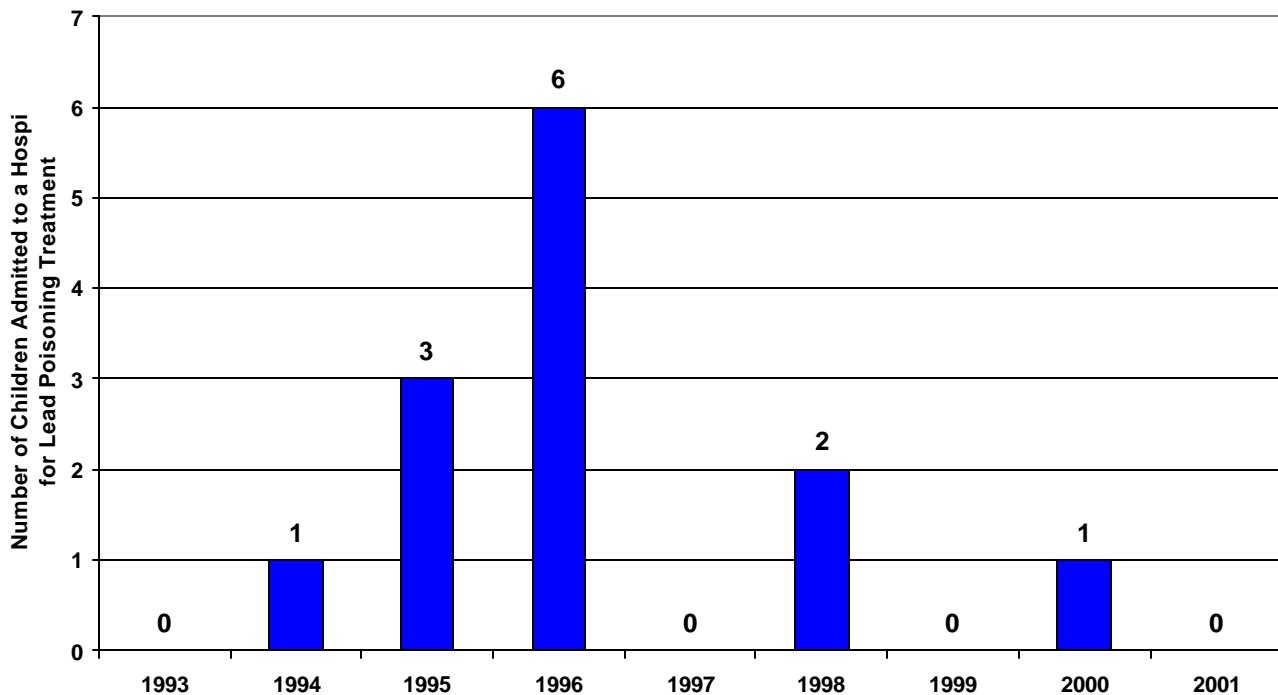
Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

Note: The definition of significantly elevated changed in July 2001 – see “How to Interpret Lead Data” for more information

### ***Hospitalizations for Children with Lead Poisoning?***

- Children with extremely high levels of lead in their blood (usually  $>45\mu\text{g/dL}$ ) require immediate medical treatment.
- Hospitalizations for lead poisoning have been becoming increasingly rare statewide in the last seven years, although it is difficult to draw trends in Central Falls.
- There were no children from Central Falls hospitalized last year, and 1 was hospitalized in 2000. Statewide, 10 children were hospitalized last year, and 9 were hospitalized in 2000.

**Number of Hospitalizations for Lead Poisoning  
(1993 to 2001 -- Central Falls)**

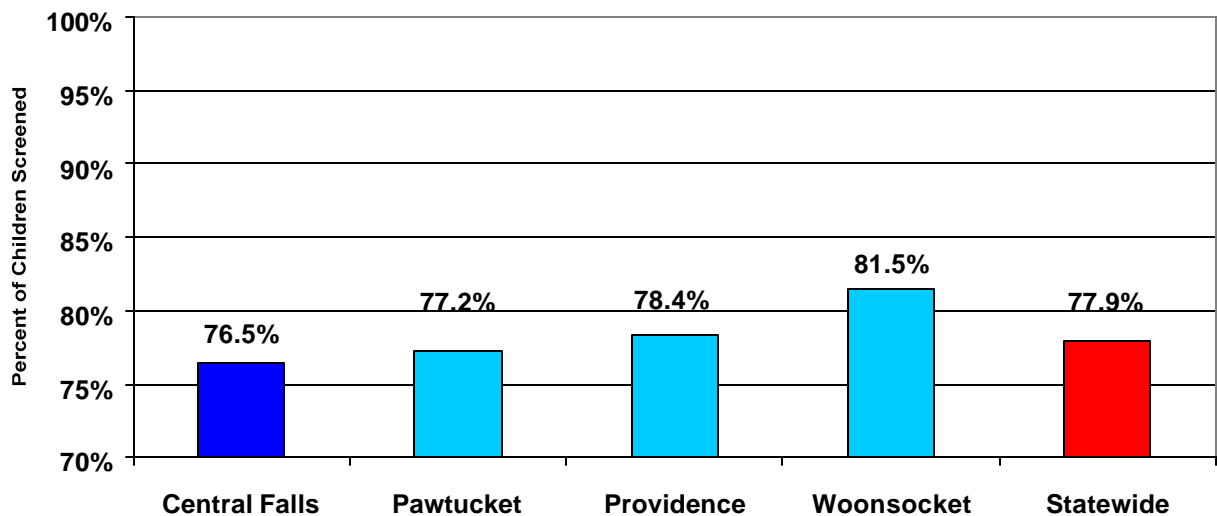


Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

## ***How Many Central Falls Children Are Screened For Lead***

- Since lead poisoning rarely has immediate symptoms, the only way to know if a child has been lead poisoned is by a blood test.
- State regulations require that doctors annually screen all children under the age of six starting at 9 months. However, doctor practices vary in this regard.
- Proof of screening is required for entry to preschool or kindergarten.
- Yet, not all children receive the required screenings.
- Screening rates vary more among cities and towns (62.5% to 88.5%) than by race or ethnicity.

**Estimated Lead Poisoning Screening Rates  
(2000 -- Major Cities and Statewide)**



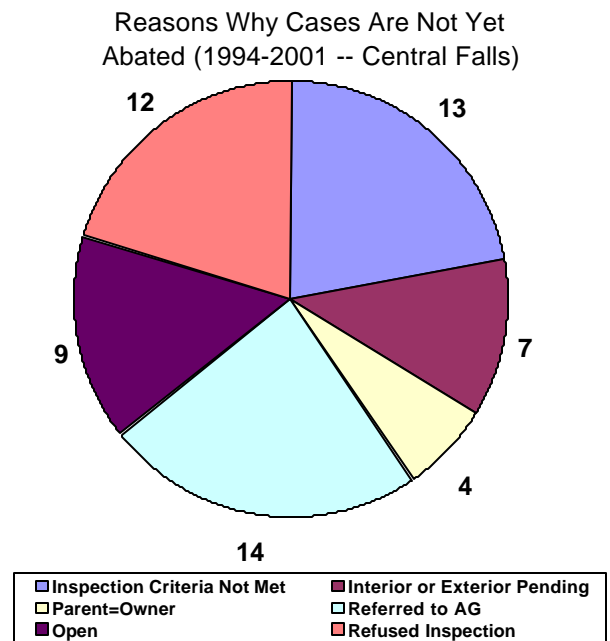
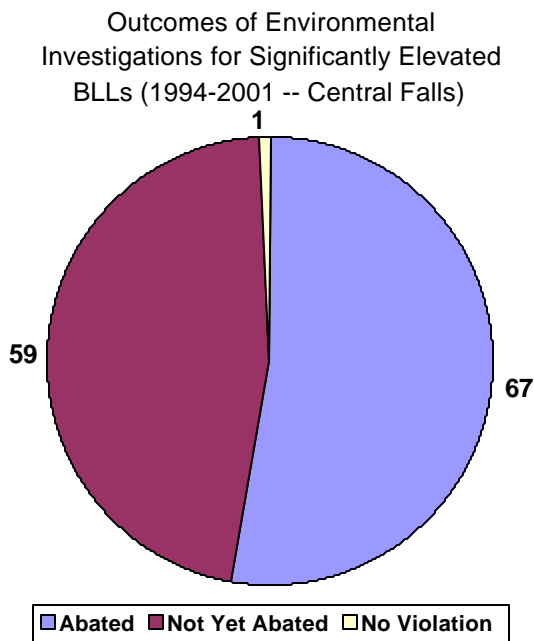
Source of data: Rhode Island Department of Health

## Central Falls Lead Inspections Overview

- From 1994 to 2001, 102 homes in Central Falls were inspected by the state as a result of a significantly poisoned child residing there.
- A significant lead hazard was identified in all but one home inspected. In 101 homes, the homeowner was issued a notice to abate the hazards and bring the dwelling into compliance with state regulation.
- As of March 2002, over half of these properties have been made safer for the poisoned child and for children who may reside there in the future.
- Continuing refusal by the property owner to comply with the regulations will result in court action to force compliance. There are currently 14 cases in Central Falls still in the hands of the Attorney General's office.
- An additional 16 cases are still considered "open" by HEALTH, meaning the owner is still under the notice to abate, is actively working towards compliance, or has abated only the interior or exterior with the other in progress.

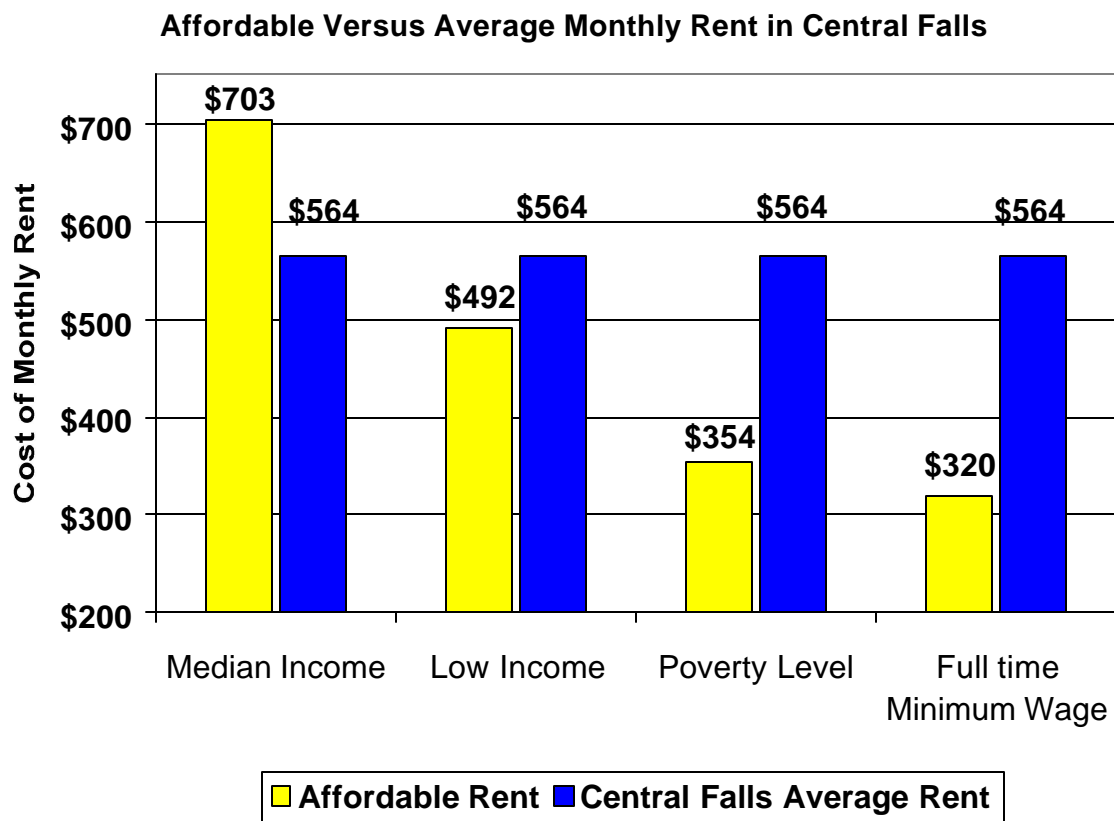
HEALTH will not pursue legal action to force abatement in certain cases:

- 4 cases were closed in Central Falls because the child's parents were the owners of the property and directed to the child's health care provider for medical follow-up. While formal action was not taken, these parents were offered technical assistance in making their homes lead safe, and many of these cases achieve a significant improvement in lead safety.
- 12 families refused to allow the inspector in and these cases had to be closed.
- In 13 cases, the child moved away, the child's blood lead level dropped to below the intervention level, or the child became older than regulations allow and thus the case was closed.



## Central Falls Housing Information

- According to the 2000 census, there were 7,270 housing units in the city of Central Falls and 225 (3%) were vacant and for rent.
- However, according to case managers who work with Central Falls' families to locate new apartments, the housing situation has never been worse.
- Families have a nearly impossible time locating a safe and affordable apartment.
- According to HUD guidelines, low income or poverty-level families are able to afford \$492 and \$354 a month respectively. To be able to afford the average Central Falls rent, a family would need to make over \$22,500 a year. The poverty level for a family of three is only \$14,150.



Source of data: Rhode Island Housing rent surveys, December 2000 and January 2001